

bahai-laws-and-ordinances-for-individuals-01

Bahá'u'lláh

Partial translation



ZAKAT - TITHES

Spiritual Purification

*"It hath been enjoined upon you to purify your means of sustenance and other such things through payment of Zakát. Thus hath it been prescribed in this exalted Tablet by Him Who is the Revealer of verses. We shall, if it be God's will and purpose, set forth erelong the measure of its assessment. He, verily, expoundeth whatsoever He desireth by virtue of His own knowledge, and He, of a truth, is Omniscient and All-Wise."*¹

*"In one of the Tablets He, exalted be His words, hath revealed: And in the matter of Zakát, We have likewise decreed that you should follow what hath been revealed in the Qur'án."*²

"payment

of

Zakát

Zakát is referred to in the Qur'án as a regular charity binding upon Muslims. In due course the concept evolved into a form of alms tax which imposed the obligation to give a fixed portion of certain categories of income, beyond specified limits, for the relief of the poor, for various charitable purposes, and to aid the Faith of God. The limit of exemption varied for different commodities, as did the percentage payable on the portion assessable.

Bahá'u'lláh states that the Bahá'í law of Zakát follows *"what hath been revealed in the Qur'án"* (Q&A 107). Since such issues as the limits for exemption, the categories of income concerned, the frequency of payments, and the scale of rates for the various categories of Zakát are not mentioned in the Qur'án, these matters will have to be set forth in the future by the Universal House of Justice. Shoghi Effendi has indicated that pending such legislation the believers should, according to their means and possibilities, make regular contributions to the Bahá'í Fund."³



1. Baha'u'llah, The Most Holy Book, para 146

2. Baha'u'llah, Questions & Answers, No. 107

3. Note to Kitab-i-Aqdas, no. 161



Babi Dispensation

The Bab did confirm the Islamic provisions for Zakat in the early period of His dispensation and prior to Persian Bayan. However, there is no mention of Zakat in the Persian Bayan.



Islamic Dispensation

Zakat is an Arabic term that means “purification” or “growth.” In the context of Islam, Zakat refers to the mandatory almsgiving or charitable donation that every adult Muslim who meets the specific criteria must pay annually. It is a means of purifying one’s wealth and helping those in need.

*"Of their goods take alms so that thou mightiest purify and sanctify them..."*⁴

The provisions of Zakat are not ordained in The Holy Quran rather they were extracted from oral traditions



Christian Dispensation

The New Testament does not command tithing in the same way as the Old Testament, it emphasizes generosity and giving from the heart. Jesus praised the widow’s offering as an act of true faith (Mark 12:41-44), and Paul encouraged cheerful, voluntary giving (2 Corinthians 9:7).



Jewish Dispensation

Under Mosaic Law, the Israelites were required to give a tenth of their crops, livestock, and income as an offering to the Lord, which supported the Levites (Leviticus 27:30-32).



⁴. The Holy Quran, Saurt al-Taba 9:103